

GOVERNMENT/INDUSTRY AERONAUTICAL CHARTING FORUM
Instrument Procedures Group
May 1, 2007
HISTORY RECORD

FAA Control # 07-01-277

Subject: Routine Charting of Remote Altimeter Setting Source (RASS)

Background/Discussion: A policy memorandum was issued by the NFPG in March, 2006, to chart RASS (remote altimeter setting source) as a backup to automated weather reporting at airports that do not have backup certified weather observers. The policy is to chart RASS only for some IAPs at a given airport. Further, when the upward adjustment in DA or MDA should cause a TERPS-mandated increase in visibility minimums (such as is done with temporary obstructions FDC NOTAMS), that higher visibility minimum should be charted in conjunction with the RASS-required higher DA/MDA value. The failure to chart the correct visibility minimum where required by a RASS height adjustment creates an adverse visibility/HAA-HAT situation, which can result in an unnecessary safety hazard. There is no rationale for making the visibility adjustment in temporary-obstacle FDC NOTAMS and not in RASS minimums.

Further, unless the RASS adjustment appears on every IAP for an airport, a significant safety hazard is created when a pilot elects (or is required because of surface wind) to fly an IAP other than the IAP with the RASS correction. For example, the FAA is presently proposing to use Rifle, Colorado as a RASS alternative for the ILS Runway 11 IAP at Grand Junction, Colorado (KGJT). Because of the distance and non-similar topography between the two airports the RASS requirement is an increase in DA/MDA of 200 feet. (This is a doubling of the ILS DA.) When the local altimeter is not available and the surface winds require the use of Runway 29, the pilot could reasonably be expected to use the minimums, as charted, for either of the Runway 29 IAPs. This could easily result in a loss of final approach required obstacle clearance and a loss of life because of controlled flight into terrain.

In the event the local automated weather equipment is completely inoperative commercial operators are not permitted to conduct instrument approach operations at such an affected airport. Action should be taken to assure that appropriate FAA oversight functions are fully aware of the implications of this FAA RASS policy. (KGJT is a Part 139 airport.)

Recommendations: (1) At airports where the FAA implements this new, apparently soon-to-be-widespread charting of RASS adjustments, all IAPs for such airports must have the adjustment published and charted. (2) Where the increase in height of the RASS adjustment triggers an 8260.3B, Table 6 visibility minimum increase, that increased visibility minimum shall be published and charted in conjunction with any RASS DA/MDA adjustment. (3) Positive, detailed communications of the operational implications of this policy upon commercial operators must be transmitted by AFS-400 to those AFS functions charged with oversight of commercial operators.

Comments: This recommendation affects policy set forth in 8260.19C, "Flight Procedures and Airspace and pertinent AFS directives to offices with oversight of commercial operators.

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Initial Discussion Meeting 07-01: New Issue presented by Rich Boll, NBAA, regarding RASS chart notes. NBAA is concerned that 1) when RASS increases the MDA, the associated visibility increases are not included in the charted notes; 2) in some cases, not all the IAPs at a given airport have the applicable RASS notes; and, 3) that appropriate FAA oversight functions may not be fully aware of the implications of FAA RASS policy. Tom Schneider, AFS-420, briefed that RASS policy has been revised in Order 8260.19D to address NBAA concerns 1 and 2. Tom also stated that all policy is coordinated through AFS-200 and 800. Additionally, AFS-400 coordinates policy with the regional AWO/PMs. This should satisfy NBAA concern #3. Brad Rush, AJW-321, stated that the NFPO will ensure that all procedures at a given airport are addressed simultaneously prior to Order 8260.19D through AVN internal policy. AFS-420 will track publication of Order 8260.19D.

Item Open – Pending Publication.

MEETING 07-02: Tom Schneider, AFS-420, briefed that policy in Order 8260.19D resolves the issue. The Order has been signed and is effective on November 26. Tom recommended the issue be closed and the group agreed. **Item Closed.**
